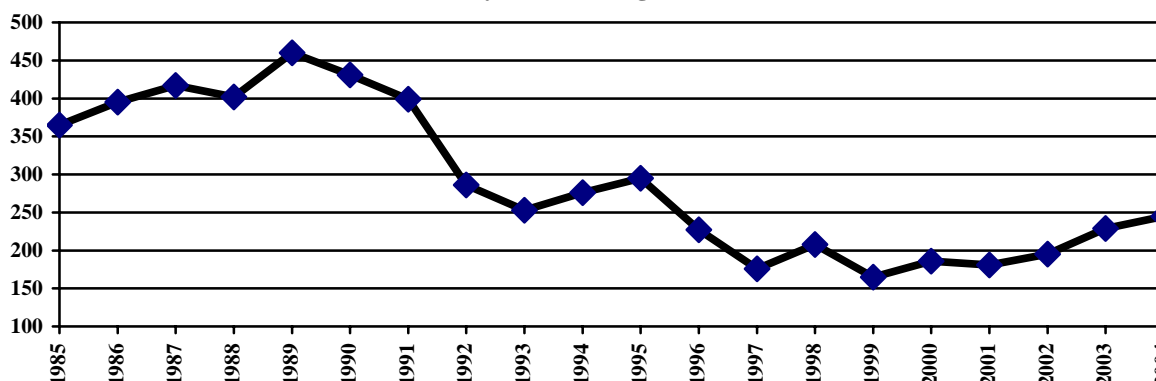


ROBBERY

is the taking or attempted taking of anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear. This crime includes muggings, purse snatchings, and bank hold-ups.

**Twenty Year Review:
Robbery in Cambridge, 1985-2004**



229 reported in 2003 • 245 reported in 2004

Due to its violent nature, robbery is one of the most feared crimes. It is one of the top crimes considered by residents when they estimate the relative “safety” of an area. It is also one of the main concerns of business owners. Often, suspects approach their individual or business target threatening to cause harm if the victim does not relinquish money or property. Weapons are brandished in some cases, however a suspect may just rely on the victim’s perceived fear of harm to commit the crime. Most incidents involve little physical contact between the suspect and victim, and

often result in no harm to the victim, especially when they do not resist the suspect’s demands.

In 2004, the total number of robberies in

	2003	2004	% Change
Commercial Robbery	41	60	+46%
Street Robbery	188	185	-2%
Total	229	245	+7%

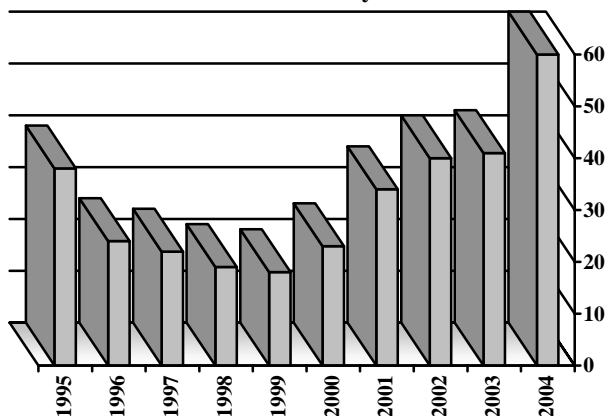
Cambridge increased for a third year in a row and is up 48% since a decade-long low in 1999. Further analysis of the two subcategories of robbery shows that this increase is due to a marked increase in *commercial* robberies, while *street* robberies saw an overall decrease.

COMMERCIAL ROBBERY

Commercial robbery is described as the taking by force or threat of force anything of value from the care or custody of a commercial or financial establishment. Examples of this crime include the bank heist, the cab stick-up, and the convenience store hold-up. Commercial incidents tend to occur early in the morning or late into the night.

From 1970-1990, Cambridge averaged 100 commercial robberies annually. Throughout the

Commercial Robbery 1995-2004



COMMERCIAL ROBBERIES BY LOCATION TYPE

Type	2002	2003	2004
Bank/Armored Car	14	18	14
Bar/Restaurant	5	1	0
Cab	1	0	7
Café	0	1	5
Convenience	2	6	10
Gas Station	5	5	15
Drug Store	1	4	0
Fast Food	1	0	2
Hotel/Motel	1	0	2
Jewelry Store	2	0	0
Liquor Store	0	0	0
Misc. Retail	7	5	5
Parking Garage	1	1	0
Total	40	41	60

1990's the number of robberies decreased dramatically to an average of 45 a year (with a high in 1990 of 102 and a low in 1999 with 18). Since 2000, the number of reported commercial robberies has been steadily increasing. In 2004, this increase was due mainly to a large number of gas station (15) and cab driver (7) robberies.

IN FOCUS:

GAS STATION ROBBERIES

The increase in robberies reported this year compared to last can be attributed largely to a marked 200% increase in gas station robberies. Five of the robberies occurred within a 17 day period in August.

The race, age and number of suspects and weapons were different across the August cases, suggesting that the majority of them were not connected. A handgun was used in four of the five robberies in August; a handgun was used or implied in 11 of the 15 gas station robberies overall.

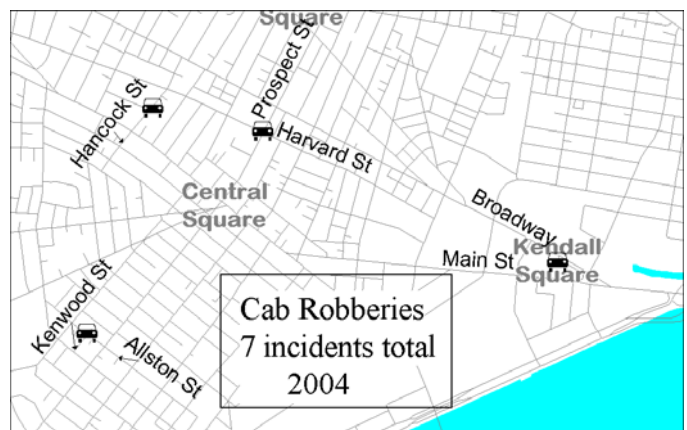
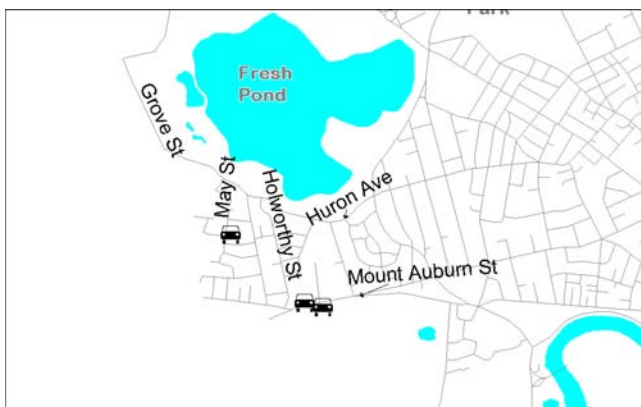
The Shell Gas Station on Monsignor O'Brien Highway reported 5 incidents over the course of the year. One arrest was made after a suspect stole the cash register while implying that he had a weapon. The suspect and cash register were apprehended a short distance away.

The Fresh Pond Gulf Station on Lexington Avenue also reported more than one incident. The male suspect in the first incident approached the attendant and made small

talk before using a gun to demand cash. In the second incident, the suspect used a silver handgun and demanded money. When he learned that the safe was locked and the attendant did not have access to it, he robbed the attendant and forced him into a back room before fleeing.

IN FOCUS: CAB ROBBERIES

Patterns of cab robberies are not common in Cambridge. Between 1997 and 2003, 12 cab robberies were reported. However a pattern emerged between August and November 2004 with 6 cab robberies (the 7th occurred earlier in the year in April). There were two additional incidents in which the cab rides originated in Cambridge, but the robberies took place in neighboring towns (Medford and Arlington).



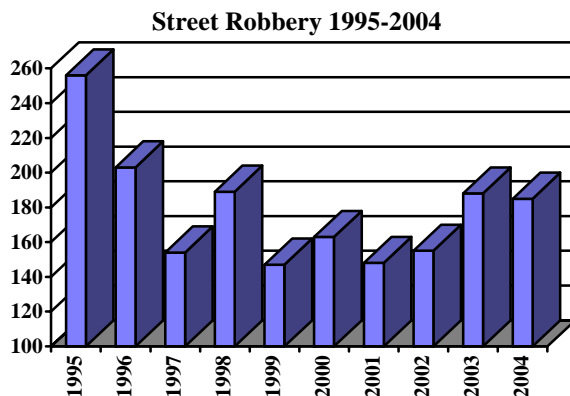
Incidents took place nearly a month apart from each other, yet they were connected by many common factors. This was a Saturday-Sunday night pattern with suspects often hailing cabs in Harvard and Central Squares. Four incidents involved a single male with a gun, knife or using strong-arm; two incidents were perpetrated by two males with knives and/or guns. Each of the incidents that originated in Cambridge involved a single suspect with a gun. No injuries were reported in these cases;

there has not been an incident in this series since mid-November.

STREET ROBBERY

Street robberies historically take place during the evening hours, particularly after drinking establishments close, and in dark areas. "Street robbery" describes all robberies committed against individuals, as opposed to

commercial establishments. Despite the name, a "street robbery" does not necessarily have to occur on the street, although more than 75% of them do. Examples of street robberies are "muggings," "car-jackings," and "purse snatchings."



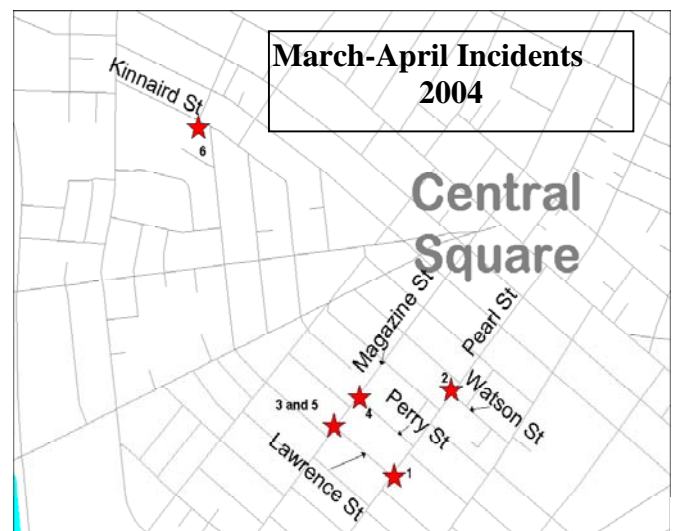
Area 4 and Cambridgeport reported the highest number of street robberies in 2004. This number is partially driven by the close proximity to Boston and the ease of travel into and from Boston from those areas in Cambridge. The high number of drinking establishments in these areas also contributes to the number of vulnerable targets leaving bars late at night.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF STREET ROBBERIES					
AREA	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
East Cambridge	12	13	18	18	15
M.I.T. Area	2	4	0	6	2
Inman/Harrington	18	10	10	6	9
Area 4	36	25	30	31	40
Cambridgeport	27	28	15	39	43
Mid-Cambridge	18	18	18	16	13
Riverside	21	11	19	19	22
Agassiz	2	6	6	2	6
Peabody	8	12	8	9	8
West Cambridge	7	10	14	9	7
North Cambridge	9	9	12	27	18
Cambridge Highlands	1	0	1	1	1
Strawberry Hill	2	1	4	3	1

** Please note that in 2003, two street robberies occurred in which the location was reported as "unknown." They are not included in this breakdown.*

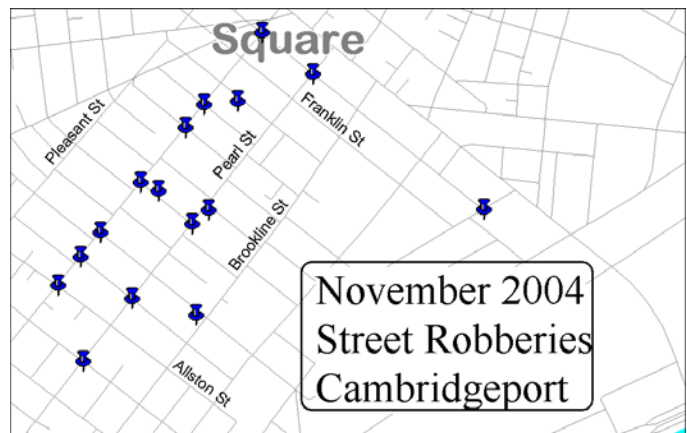
IN FOCUS: CAMBRIDGEPORT PATTERNS

Beginning in the first quarter and continuing into the second, there were six street robberies within a one month period in upper Cambridgeport. Victims were approached between 7PM and 11PM as suspects demanded their money or property. This pattern slowly dissipated with the arrests of key suspects who were linked to multiple incidents.



IN FOCUS: YEAR-END CAMBRIDGEPORT AND INMAN SQUARE ROBBERIES

At the end of the year, starting in November, there were two patterns of street robberies taking place, one in Cambridgeport and one in Inman Square, on the Somerville border. In Cambridgeport, 2 or 3 male suspects were approaching victims in the early evening between 5-6 p.m. and in the late evening between 11 p.m.-1 a.m. Suspects approached victims, engaged them in conversation, threatened physical harm, and in some instances implied they were in possession of a dangerous weapon. At the beginning of December, undercover surveillance officers were able to arrest a suspect while in the act, and he and his accomplices admitted to being involved in at least 11 other area robberies. The arrested individuals were all Boston residents with ties to Cambridge. The hotspot area of these robberies is detailed in the map to the right.



Also during this time, there were three street robberies in Inman Square and one in Area 4. Two male teen suspects were suspected in each incident and white females between the ages of 32-54, walking alone, were the victims in three of the incidents. Somerville Police reported similar incidents, all with female victims on the city border along Webster Avenue. These incidents are still under investigation.

FIVE HISTORICAL STREET ROBBERY HOT SPOTS

1. **CENTRAL SQUARE**, specifically the area of Massachusetts Avenue between Washington and Franklin Streets, down Pearl Street. This is also a prime location for homeless on homeless robberies. Mostly predatory, but also purse snatchings concentrated in the late afternoon and late evening.
2. **CAMBRIDGESIDE GALLERIA**, particularly the First Street entrance, including the Lechmere MBTA Station area. These are usually juveniles robbing each other between 3:30PM and 6:00PM
3. **HARVARD SQUARE**, around Church Street, Brattle Street and Harvard Yard. Predatory robberies in the late evening mixed with early evening pack robberies.
4. **RUSSELL FIELD AND THE ALEWIFE MBTA STATION**. The 300-400 blocks of Rindge Avenue hold the major concentration for these incidents. Bully boy and pack robbers target people leaving the station and crossing through the field.
5. **UPPER CAMBRIDGEPORT**, the area surrounded by Franklin and Erie Streets, between Brookline and Pleasant Streets. These incidents are predatory in nature and concentrated during the late night and predawn hours of weekends.

Protect yourself and your business!! Please see page 139 for tips on how you can protect yourself against becoming a robbery victim, and how to handle the situation if you do find yourself in dangerous circumstances.

FREQUENTLY OCCURRING SCENARIOS IN CAMBRIDGE

A long-term trend analysis of street robberies in Cambridge reveals a number of frequently recurring scenarios. The number in parenthesis after the category indicates how frequently that categorization occurred in Cambridge this past year:

Acquaintance Robberies (10): Related to domestic robbery and homeless robbery (see below), Acquaintance Robberies are committed by someone the victim knows. Common scenarios include drinking buddies robbing each other after a night at the bar, friends turning on each other, drug disputes, and robberies between co-workers.

ATM Robberies (8): In this type of robbery, the suspect may approach the victim immediately after the victim withdraws money from an ATM and demand for them to hand over the cash, or the suspect may wait behind the victim as they make a transaction, then take the money directly from the ATM and run. An ATM robbery can also occur when suspects approach a victim on the street, threaten the victim by displaying or implying a weapon, and demand the victim go to an ATM and withdraw money for them.

Bully Boys (5): Juvenile robberies of intimidation. In most occurrences, the victim knows the perpetrators. Committed by and against school-aged youths, they occur on the way home from school, or at playgrounds, malls, parks, and skating rinks. Two to four juvenile males usually strong-arm their victim, stealing such things as his jacket, hat, or lunch money.

Carjacking (0): In this scenario, a lone predator approaches a victim entering or exiting his or her car, or when stopped at a traffic light. In no hesitant terms, the robber orders the victim out of the vehicle and demands the keys.

Dial-A-Victim (7): These robberies target delivery service personnel. In these situations, suspects usually brandishing a knife or gun intercept a delivery person.

Domestic (5): This type of scenario occurs when someone close to the victim, like a family member, romantic partner or roommate, takes money or property from them by the use or threat of violence.

Drug Deal (1): Typically drug deals gone awry.

Homeless Robberies (5): These are incidents of homeless people robbing each other. The majority of these robberies occur in the vicinity of Central and Harvard Squares, or at various shelters. The victim is usually acquainted with the perpetrator, and in many cases, both are intoxicated. Property stolen ranges from a bottle of wine to a blanket to a pair of shoes. Like domestic robberies, homeless robberies are sometimes precipitated by past debts, real or imaginary.

Pack Robberies (27): In this situation, a group of three to eight young males will stalk victims around shopping malls, MBTA stations, streets, and recreational areas. The majority of these robberies occur on Friday or Saturday nights, when the “pack” is returning from a dance or party. The robberies are not always premeditated, but the victim—typically a male between the ages of 15-25, walking alone—simply ends up on the wrong place at the wrong time. Weapons are seldom used, but strong-arm tactics are applied. Usually, the victim is knocked to the ground or ordered to lie down.

Predatory Robberies (97): This type of street robbery has the most pronounced effect on a citizen’s perception of safety. Predatory robberies are synonymous with “muggings.” In the typical scenario, one or two men approach the victim with knife or gun and demand cash. The danger of serious injury is constantly present. Cambridge typically experiences more two-person predatory robberies than any other type.

The Crime Analysis Unit has divided the predatory robberies even further into “crude” and “professional” sub-categories.

“Crude” means that the robbers were edgy, unprepared, and unpredictable (69 incidents in 2004). In “professional” predatory robberies, the robbers are collected, efficient, and effective (28 incidents).

Purse Snatch (16): The purse-snatcher is generally unarmed, and has little intent to cause injury. After “casing” a victim—a female carrying a purse, bag, or wallet—this robber approaches quick from behind—on foot or on a bicycle—and snatches the item out of the victim’s hands or off her shoulder before she has a chance to react, often effecting a “body check” in the process. Many incidents also involve the snatching of purses from the ground at outdoor cafes where accessibility is easy.

Bikejackers (2): Juvenile robberies of intimidation where the primary property target are bicycles.

Home Invasion (2): One of the most serious robbery types. Home invasions involve robbers entering their victim’s homes, usually at night, subduing the residents, and robbing the home. Fortunately this type of robbery is rare in Cambridge, and when it occurs the victim generally knows the perpetrator.

